

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

SAB-01 ACDA-05 SAJ-01 /086 W
----- 066454

R 210920Z OCT 75X

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 4925

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 4081

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY

SUBJECT: REPORTED COMMENTS OF COS SHIHABI ON GOLAN AND LEBANON

1. WELL CONNECTED SYRIAN BUSINESSMAN TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HAD ASKED COS SHIHABI OCT. 18 WHY TENSION WAS BEING RAISED ON GOLAN. SHIHABI REPLIED THAT IT WAS NOTHING HE SHOULD WORRY ABOUT.

2. SHIHABI THEN OFFERED BUSINESSMAN HIS PERSONAL ADVICE WHICH WAS TO GET HIS MONEY OUT OF LEBANON. SHIHABI PREDICTED FURTHER INSTABILITY IN LEBANON WHETHER OR NOT CURRENT RECONCILIATION EFFORTS SUCCEEDED.

3. LATER AT SAME SOCIAL FUNCTION, BUSINESSMAN VOLUNTEERED TO ANOTHER EMBOFF WITH WHOM HE WAS DISCUSSING EGYPTIAN DECISION TO WITHDRAW ITS AIRCRAFT FROM SYRIA THAT SYRIA WOULD SOON BE RECEIVING MIG-25S.

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4. COMMENT: WHEN COUPLED WITH AP CORRESPONDENT
FARES' ACCOUNT OF WAY SYRIAN MILITARY AUTHORITY
FED HIM MISLEADING INFORMATION REGARDING ISRAELI
ACTIONS ON GOLAN (DAMASCUS 4048), SHIHABI'S STATE-
MENT MAY BE INTERPRETED AS TACIT ADMISSION THAT
SARG HAS TAKEN DECISION TO EFFECT A CONTROLLED
INCREASE IN TENSION ON GOLAN. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE
THAT BUSINESSMAN'S COMMENT REGARDING MIG-25S MAY
HAVE COME FROM SHIHABI AND MAY BE A RESULT OF
ASAD'S MOSCOW TRIP, THOUGH WE HAVE NO INDEPENDENT
CONFIRMATION OF EITHER OF THESE SPECULATIONS AT
THIS TIME.
MURPHY

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NNN

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